[19th August 1925

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" The Irrigation Committee to which reference has been made is itself authorized to call for them and I am sure my hon. Friend, who is a very prominent Member of the Committee, will proceed to do so."

Panchayat Courts.

Housing of Panchayat courts.

*143 Q.—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA : Will the hon. the Law Member and the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) what steps have been taken with a view to housing panchayat courts in this Presidency, especially in South Kanara ;

(*b*) what accommodation is provided for clients and their witnesses so that the court is separated from the crowd that gathers in the court-house and for records ;

(*c*) whether it is a fact that many of the panchayat courts are like market places, with no arrangements for preventing rush of a crowd, noise and nuisance ;

(*d*) whether this is specially the case in the Mangalore panchayat court ;

(*e*) whether any provision has been made in the budget estimates for 1925-26 for village panchayat court buildings or whether it is to be made for the year 1926-27, and if so, for which courts ; and

(*f*) if not, at whose cost the courts are to be housed ?

A.—(*a*) A chavadi, any public place, or the verandah of any big house or a mahal or shed is generally used for holding a panchayat court. This rule is probably followed in South Kanara also.

(*b*), (*c*) & (*d*) So far the Government have not received any complaints in the matter.

(*e*) & (*f*) Do not arise.

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" Do not Government take notice of complaints regarding the housing of panchayat courts if they are made in the local papers ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" The general policy regarding the housing of panchayats is that they should be housed as cheaply as possible and we ought not to embark upon any project or scheme or constructing court-houses for the panchayat courts. That is in order to make it possible for them to work in the experimental stage at all events in such a way as to result in the greatest benefit and the cheapest cost. It is in pursuance of that policy that the answer has been given."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" If panchayat courts are held in chavadis and other places where there is a great noise, the proceedings cannot be conducted in a decent manner. Do Government think that this is a desirable thing ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" If in a particular locality a chavadi is unsuitable and if the local authorities or the panchayat address Government and point out an alternative as a remedy, Government will undoubtedly consider it carefully."